Message Text

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CONFIDENTIAL SHIRAZ 0050

EO 11652: GDS TAGS: CPRS, IR

SUBJ: UMANN'S BOATS

REF: (A) STATE 054060; (B) SHIRAZ 0046

WHILE IMPORTATION OF PLEASURE BOATS BY INDIVIDUALS FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS NOT QUOTE ILLEGAL UNQUOTE, A MINISTRY OF WAR PERMIT IS REQUIRED AND SUCH PERMITS ARE SELDOM GRANTED TO PRIVATE SECTOR IMPORTERS. ACCORDING TO DI-RECTOR GENERAL OF PORTS AND SHIPPING ORGANIZATION AND CHIEF OF CUSTOMS IN BANDAR SHAHPOUR, HOWEVER, RULES MEAN LITTLE WHEN INFLUENTIAL PRIVATE CITIZENS WANT TO BRING THINGS. SUCH AS PLEASURE BOATS, INTO IRAN OUTSIDE REGULAR CHANNELS. HOSSEIN PARVIN, ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTORS IN THE UMANN'S BOATS AFFAIR, APPEARS TO BE VERY WELL CONNECTED. HE, PERHAPS WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF RETIRED GENERAL KAMRAN AMJADI, ANOTHER KEY FIGURE AND FORMER SENIOR OFFICER WITH SAVAK, APPARENTLY MANAGED TO GAIN MINISTRY OF WAR APPROVAL FOR IMPORTATION OF THE BOATS. OFFICIALS IN BANDAR SHAHPOUR SPECULATE THAT BRIBERY MIGHT HAVE BEEN OR WILL BE INVOLVED (THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE PORTS AND SHIPPING ORGANIZATION BELIEVES THAT ONE OR MORE OF THE BOATS THEMSELVES MAY BE INTENDED FOR PAY-OFFS). TOMSETH

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